

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

Claims 1-13 (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method for processing contract data associated with services to be provided via a network in an infrastructure, in which a plurality of binding contracts exists between a service provider and a service requestor for services having a respective number of service specifications, the method comprising:

creating said contract data comprising contract selection parameters for selecting at least one service contract out of said plurality of contracts;

including said contract data into a request for said service;

issuing said request for said service; and

receiving the service according to said selection, ~~wherein~~

~~said contract data is processed via software interfaces adapted to comprise said contract data, said interfaces comprising respective definitions of the transport protocol in use, of the messaging protocol in use and on an associated port type in use,~~

~~said contract selection parameters are transported in a SOAP message conforming to the SOAP standard,~~

~~multiple contract selection parameters are combined in a single service request, and~~

~~said contract selection parameters comprise meta-data identifying a particular contract.~~

Claims 15-20 (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) A service requester computer server hardware system for processing contract data associated with services to be provided via a network in an infrastructure in which a plurality of binding contracts exists between a service provider and a service requestor for services having a respective number of service specifications, the system comprising:

a contract data module means for creating said contract data comprising contract selection parameters for selecting at least one service contract out of said plurality of contracts;

a request population module means for including said contract data into a request for said service;

a request issuance module means for issuing said request for said service via network; and

a receiving module means for receiving the service according to said selection, wherein  
said contract data is processed via software interfaces adapted to comprise said contract data, said interfaces comprising respective definitions of the transport protocol in use, of the messaging protocol in use and on an associated port type in use,

said contract selection parameters are transported in a SOAP message conforming to the SOAP standard;

multiple contract selection parameters are combined in a single service request, and  
said contract selection parameters comprise meta-data identifying a particular contract.

Claims 22-27 (Cancelled)

28. (Currently Amended) A computer usable tangible medium having computer readable instructions embodied therein for processing contract data associated with services to be provided via a network in an infrastructure in which a plurality of binding contracts exists between a service provider and a service requestor for services having a respective number of service specifications, the computer readable instructions, when executed on a computer system, causing the computer system to perform the operations comprising:

creating said contract data comprising contract selection parameters for selecting at least one service contract out of said plurality of contracts;

including said contract data into a request for said service;

issuing said request for said service; and

receiving the service according to said selection, ~~wherein~~

~~said contract data is processed via software interfaces adapted to comprise said contract data, said interfaces comprising respective definitions of the transport protocol in use, of the messaging protocol in use and on an associated port type in use,~~

~~said contract selection parameters are transported in a SOAP message conforming to the SOAP standard,~~

~~multiple contract selection parameters are combined in a single service request, and~~

~~said contract selection parameters comprise meta-data identifying a particular contract.~~

Claims 29-34 (Cancelled)

35. (New) A computer-implemented method for processing contract data associated with services to be provided via a network in an infrastructure, in which a plurality of binding

contracts exists between a service provider and a service requestor for services having a respective number of service specifications, the method comprising:

receiving said contract data included in the request with which the service is requested, wherein said contract data comprises contract selection parameters for selecting at least one service contract out of said plurality of contracts;

evaluating said contract selection parameters;

selecting one particular contract according to said evaluation and further selection logic; and

providing the service according to said contract.

36. (New) The method according to claim 14, wherein said contract data is processed via software interfaces adapted to comprise said contract data, said interfaces comprising respective definitions of the transport protocol in use, of the messaging protocol in use and on an associated port type in use.

37. (New) The method according to claim 14, wherein said contract data is processed within header fields of a web service request.

38. (New) The method according to claim 14, wherein said contract data is processed as a part of the endpoint specification of a respective service request.

39. (New) The method according to claim 14, wherein said contract selection parameters are transported in a SOAP message conforming to the SOAP standard.

40. (New) The method according to claim 14, wherein multiple contract selection parameters are combined in a single service request.

41. (New) The method according to claim 14, wherein said contract selection parameters comprise meta-data identifying a particular contract.

42. (New) The system according to claim 21, wherein said contract data is processed via software interfaces adapted to comprise said contract data, said interfaces comprising respective definitions of the transport protocol in use, of the messaging protocol in use and on an associated port type in use.

43. (New) The system according to claim 21, wherein said contract data is processed within header fields of a web service request.

44. (New) The system according to claim 21, wherein said contract data is processed as a part of the endpoint specification of a respective service request.

45. (New) The system according to claim 21, wherein said contract selection parameters are transported in a SOAP message conforming to the SOAP standard.

46. (New) The system according to claim 21, wherein multiple contract selection parameters are combined in a single service request.

47. (New) The system according to claim 21, wherein said contract selection parameters comprise meta-data identifying a particular contract.

48. (New) The computer usable tangible medium according to claim 28, wherein said contract data is processed via software interfaces adapted to comprise said contract data, said interfaces comprising respective definitions of the transport protocol in use, of the messaging protocol in use and on an associated port type in use.

49. (New) The computer usable tangible medium according to claim 28, wherein said contract data is processed within header fields of a web service request.

50. (New) The computer usable tangible medium according to claim 28, wherein said contract data is processed as a part of the endpoint specification of a respective service request.

51. (New) The computer usable tangible medium according to claim 28, wherein said contract selection parameters are transported in a SOAP message conforming to the SOAP standard.

52. (New) The computer usable tangible medium according to claim 28, wherein multiple contract selection parameters are combined in a single service request.

53. (New) The computer usable tangible medium according to claim 28, wherein said contract selection parameters comprise meta-data identifying a particular contract.